

# IOWA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NEWSLETTER



Camp Dodge, 7105 NW 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Building 3663, Johnston, IA 50131  
515-242-5331 800-838-4692 <https://va.iowa.gov>

## Winter 2013

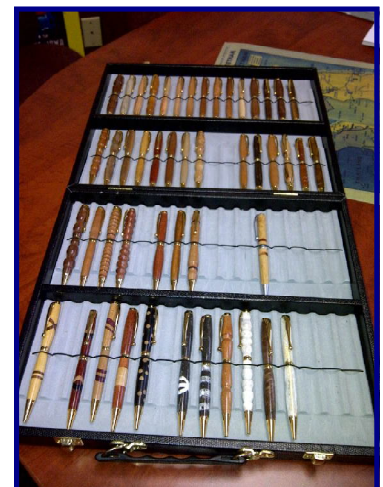
— from IDVA Director Jodi Tymeson:



*Veteran working in VFC workshop*



*Built & operated by donations*



*Beautiful pens made by vets at VFC*

I was thrilled to have the opportunity to tour the Veteran's Freedom Center in Dubuque on March 8 (see story below). The VFC is a great example of how an idea can become reality with the hard work and dedication of folks like Jim Wagner and the generous and kind efforts of all those who donate funds, equipment, materials, and volunteer their time. I want to personally thank Jim for the tour and congratulate him and all those who make the Veteran's Freedom Center a great place for veterans to gather!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Veteran's Freedom Center in Dubuque is a nonprofit community center for area veterans. The center opened in the Spring of 2011 in downtown Dubuque but has since moved into a larger location on Kerper Boulevard. The Center began as an idea of Jim Wagner.

The Center's mission is to meet the needs of all military active duty, reserve, and honorably discharged tri-state military veterans of all affiliations. They offer a place to interact with fellow veterans and provide the camaraderie that they have shared while proudly serving their country.

For those in need of financial, physical, or mental assistance, the center has extensive resource information. It also offers a woodworking shop, an exercise room, arts & craft opportunities and leisure activities such as pool, darts, cards, big-screen television, music, and computer accessibility. There is no cost for the veteran.

The Freedom Center also has a program entitled, "Operation We Care." This program supports those veterans and/or their families that have special needs that cannot be met by other assistance. It provides financial and other supportive service to veterans "in need."

Operation funds for Veteran's Freedom Center is obtained from community fundraisers, private and business donations, and eligible grant awards. It is supported by volunteers. Visit and tour the center: 2245 Kerper Blvd., Suite 1, Dubuque, IA 52001, call: 563-845-0034, email: [vfc@mediacombb.net](mailto:vfc@mediacombb.net), or follow them on facebook: Vfs Dubuque.

## Iowa's Fallen Heroes

Army Staff Sergeant Steven P. Blass, 27, a resident of Estherville, Iowa, died March 11, 2013, while serving on active duty in Afghanistan. Blass was one of five American soldiers who died when their UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter went down outside Kandahar City, the capital of Kandahar province. The NATO military coalition said that "initial reports" showed no enemy activity in the area at the time. The cause of the crash is under investigation.

Blass was assigned to the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Aviation Regiment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, Georgia. Blass, a Black Hawk crew chief, joined the Army in March 2006 and arrived at the unit in August 2012. This was his second deployment.

Blass was born on April 1, 1985 in Estherville, Iowa. He attended Estherville High School and played football. He worked on the family farm, but his childhood dream was to join the service. His grandfather had been in the army. He joined the Army's 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division a few years after high school and served during multiple tours overseas. He had always wanted to fly helicopters and had hoped to train as a pilot.

His military honors include Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal (2), Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal (2), National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal w/Bronze Service Star (3), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Noncommissioned Officers Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, NATO Medal, Basic Aviation Badge, Parachutist Badge, Basic Combat and Special Skill Badge, Basic Marksmanship Badge and Bar. Rank: SSG, Weapon: Rifle Expert.



SSgt. Steven Blass

Steven is survived by wife, Tricia, son, Hayden, parents Randy and Carol Blass, and many other family members and friends.

Services were held March 26 at Estherville High School, with interment following at North Lawn Memorial Park Cemetery in Spencer.

## Iowa Veterans Cemetery



Keith Blum, Iowa Veterans Cemetery Superintendent predicts that Spring is nearly here! The cemetery experienced a fairly "normal" winter. Last year they *never* used propane, but this year they used 8-100 lb. bottles of propane to thaw the ground. In 2010 they used 20 bottles and 21 the year before that. Currently the cemetery crew is preparing the cemetery grounds and getting the mowers ready. They have fertilizer ordered and did some over-seeding last fall. They are ready for a well groomed cemetery this year!

The Iowa Veterans Cemetery reports that through March 18, 2013 there are:  
Applications on file: Over 7,118   Interments: 1,472   Veterans Interred: 1,211  
Dependents interred: 261   Other states represented: 35   *In Memory of Markers:* 46

## County News

### Welcome to our newest County Directors & Administrators of Veterans Affairs:

Rick Schaecher, Adair County  
Jim Reiley, Adams County  
Marion Miller, Jr., Jackson County  
Christopher Chartier, Jasper county  
Gary Boseneiler, Johnson County  
Melissa Gray, Mills County  
Craig Sorenson, Osceola County  
Wayne Thieman, Plymouth County  
Marty Cremer, Wapello County  
Dan Lewandowski, Webster County  
Brett Schmidt, Worth County

### The following County Veterans Affairs offices now have Facebook pages:

Bremer: [www.facebook.com/BremerCountyVeteransAffairs](http://www.facebook.com/BremerCountyVeteransAffairs)  
Davis: [www.facebook.com/#!/groups/105896359488681/?fref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/105896359488681/?fref=ts)  
Franklin: [www.facebook.com/pages/Franklin-County-Iowa-Veterans-Affairs/491676350865748](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Franklin-County-Iowa-Veterans-Affairs/491676350865748)  
Grundy: [www.facebook.com/pages/Grundy-County-Iowa/231608593642906](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Grundy-County-Iowa/231608593642906)  
Jasper: [www.facebook.com/pages/Jasper-County-Veterans-Affairs-Office/235591313229371](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Jasper-County-Veterans-Affairs-Office/235591313229371)  
Palo Alto: [www.facebook.com/PaloAltoCountyVeteransAffairs](http://www.facebook.com/PaloAltoCountyVeteransAffairs)  
Pottawattamie: [www.facebook.com/pages/Pottawattamie-County-Veteran-Affairs/134188813317403?ref=hl](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pottawattamie-County-Veteran-Affairs/134188813317403?ref=hl)  
Wright: [www.facebook.com/WrightCountyVeteransAffairs](http://www.facebook.com/WrightCountyVeteransAffairs)

### Mark Your Calendars:

Vietnam Veterans Day	May 5, 2013, 2:30 – 50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Vietnam War, Camp Dodge Pool Pavilion; Open House Gold Star Military Museum – 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Vietnam Veterans Day	May 7, 2013, 12:00 noon – Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Capitol Grounds
Memorial Day	May 27, 2013, 8:00 a.m. – Iowa Veterans Cemetery
Veterans Day State Fair	August 12, 2013, 10:00 a.m. All parade participants will be admitted free
Veterans Day on the Hill	January 22, 2014 – State Capitol

### Upcoming Job Fairs

U.S. Army Garrison/Rock Island Arsenal: Wednesday April 17, 2013 and Wednesday September 4, 2013, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For information, contact Ethel Robinson: [ethel.m.robinson.civ@mail.mil](mailto:ethel.m.robinson.civ@mail.mil) or 309-782-2913/5711

Sioux City Job Fair, Western Iowa Tech: April 18, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Dunker Student Center. Info: 712-274-8733 or [sara.ruby@witcc.edu](mailto:sara.ruby@witcc.edu).

Iowa Works Career & Resource Expo: April 29, 2013, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the DMACC Ankeny Campus. For more info: [www.ffaenrichmentcenter.com/directions.aspx](http://www.ffaenrichmentcenter.com/directions.aspx).

Hiring Our Heroes – Marion, Iowa: May 22, 2013, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The American Legion Post #298, 625 31st Street. For information, contact [hiringourheroes@uschamber.com](mailto:hiringourheroes@uschamber.com) or 202-463-5807.



## County News Con't.

### Humboldt County

Craig Malloy, Humboldt County VSO, reports that there will be two Brushy Creek Area Honor Flights out of Fort Dodge this year. The first one is scheduled for Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> and the second one for Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. There will be approximately 110 WW II and Korean War veterans on each of the flights (220 total). About 95 to 100 Korean War Vets and approximately 10 to 15 WWII veterans have signed up for each flight. World War II veterans and terminally ill veterans will continue to have priority.

### Marion County

Representatives from Marion County VA (Mike Kuhn), Mahaska (Karie Foster), Monroe (Dianne Durian), IDVA (Bob Steben) and other agencies recently participated in the March 6<sup>th</sup> Pella Corp Health Fair.



### Page County

Rod Riley, Page County VSO, reports that since receiving a van from the Omaha VA in 2009 to transport their veterans to doctor appointments at the CBOC in Shenandoah and the Omaha VA Hospital, the service has been more successful than they ever anticipated. They began with 25 veterans and 4 drivers; they now have another transport van and current numbers are 152 veterans as of January 1<sup>st</sup>. This service is provided by only 9 volunteer drivers and they cover 5 counties in Iowa and 2 in Missouri. Both vehicles are usually out every day. Last year they transported a total of 451 veterans, drove 48,528 miles and put in 1,835.25 hours. All the miles were driven by volunteers.

The outreach assistance to veterans has also increased the county VA office visibility and they are seeing A LOT of new faces and meeting a lot of very nice people.

### Scott County

David "Woody" Woods, Scott County VSO, forwarded this photo of almost 100 cadets from Davenport Central's Army JROTC program who visited veterans at the VA Hospital in Iowa City on Valentine's Day. The ca-



dets spent the day with the veterans and brought them valentine cards. Woody commented that, "It's interesting to see a group of young high school kids spending time with us old veterans!"

## County News Con't.

### Story County - 2013 Flag Day Event

On Flag Day, June 14, 2013, a ceremony commemorating the original dedication of two important Story County Civil War artifacts will be held in Nevada. 2013 marks the Sesquicentennial observance of the Civil War.

A cannon and bronze tablet — long a part of Story County history, will be re-dedicated at 12:00 p.m. in front of the Story County Administration Building, 900 Sixth Street, Nevada.

The cannon is a Confederate Parrott 3-inch cannon that was placed in front of the old courthouse in 1901 by the GAR (Grand Army of the Republic). The tablet, mounted on granite, features a profile of President Abraham Lincoln and the words of the Gettysburg Address. It was dedicated on Flag Day 1930 by the WRC (Women's Relief Corps).

SUVCW (Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War) re-enactors will take part in the ceremony that will also honor Jason Devillo Ferguson, Story County's first hero of the Civil War. He was mortally wounded at the Battle of Shiloh, 6 April 1862, where he is buried. Grand Army of the Republic Post #31 and the Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the GAR Post #147 are named in his honor. These organizations donated the historic cannon and tablet to the county.

All Civil War soldiers who volunteered will be honored as well as the 550 veterans who found their final resting place in Story County.

It is hoped the event will be designated a Sesquicentennial Signature Event. The public is invited.

The event is supported by Story County Board of Supervisors, Story County Veterans Affairs, Iowa Genealogical Society, Story County Genealogical Society, Story City Historical Society, Slater Area Historical Association, Nevada Community Historical Society, Maxwell Community Historical Society, Ames Historical Society, Cambridge Historical Association Society, Gilbert Historical Society and Huxley Historical Society. For a day-to-day history of the Civil War, go to [www.civilwar150.org](http://www.civilwar150.org).

For more information, please contact Brett McLain at 515-956-2625 or [bmclain@storycounty.com](mailto:bmclain@storycounty.com).

### Winneshiek County

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on March 22, 2013 for the new Veterans Affairs Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Decorah. A portion of the former Walmart building in Centrum Plaza was remodeled for the clinic.

The new CBOC will offer services that include primary care, blood draws, electrocardiograms and pulmonary function testing, chronic disease management, diabetic education, and group and individual ses-



*photo courtesy of Iowa City VA Health Care System*

sions. Weight loss and weight management classes will also be offered. In addition, mental health services, mental health providers, substance abuse counseling, and smoking cessation will be provided. The VA will continue to send veterans to Iowa City for more advanced testing and medical care.

The clinic is located at 915 Short Street, Decorah, Iowa, 52101; 563-387-5840. Hours are M-F 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

## Local News and Updates

### Iowa's Oldest Known Veteran

On Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, Bill Schaefer drove to Emmetsburg to photograph Iowa's oldest known veteran, Loren Greiner, who turned 105 on that day.

Bill reports, "It was an awesome experience to meet this veteran. Loren drove his own car until he was 102, lived alone in his own house until he was 103. He is intellectually as sharp and engaging as any person of 50. Last week before his birthday he sat down at his computer and wrote a four-page reflection on his military service in WWII. Drafted in 1942, at age 33, he already had a degree from the University of Iowa, and had started upon a career with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. He was a radio carrier in the Army when he landed at Omaha Beach on D-Day. His company fought all the way through France, Belgium, and into Germany. In the photo he holds, he is with his younger brother (who died last year at age 99) at Reims Cathedral in France in June, 1945, on his way back from Germany. Loren resumed his career back home and married at age 40, raising a family. He has been a widower for more than 30 years. To sum it up, this man is absolutely amazing!" (Bill thanks the Veterans Affairs office of Palo Alto County for their help in locating Loren Greiner.)



Loren Greiner, Age 105, March, 2013

Photo by Bill Schaefer



## Writing My Way Back Home A Writer's Workshop for Veterans

"Writing My Way Back Home" — A free writer's workshop open to all current and former military personnel, spouses, and teen dependents — April 5-7, 2013.

We each have a story to tell and the *WRITING MY WAY BACK HOME* weekend workshop will help gain the tools and confidence to craft and share your story well. Using reading and writing exercises, the workshop will explore deployment and wartime experiences — the fear, boredom, anxieties, thrills, brutality, tears and beauty — considering ways to write a personal story and make it compelling. By the end of the weekend, workshop participants will have had the chance to try out a range of styles and approaches to produce stories, poetry, fiction, and blogs. Opportunities to work one-on-one with professional writers during the weekend, as well as online follow-up, will help continue the writing and revision process. No writing experience is needed to attend this workshop. A public reading for course participants interested in sharing excerpts from their work will complete the weekend.

#### Weekend Schedule:

Friday: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Saturday: 9:00 am - Noon

1:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Sunday: 9:00 am - Noon

Public reading TBA

Lunch provided Saturday & Sunday

Register soon! Class size is limited.

#### Contact Information:

*Writing My Way Back Home*

PO Box 3470

Iowa City, Iowa 52244

415-450-1316

[emma.rainey4@gmail.com](mailto:emma.rainey4@gmail.com)

[http://www.writingmywaybackhome.com/registration\\_form](http://www.writingmywaybackhome.com/registration_form)



## Local News and Updates Con't.

### New Games Released to Benefit Iowa Veterans' Causes

The Iowa Lottery recently released two new games that benefit veterans' causes. The "A 10 Hut" instant-scratch game and the "Veterans Amazing 8's" debuted in January 2013. Tickets for both games cost \$1.00 and are available at lottery retail outlets statewide, and feature the Iowa Veterans Trust Fund logo so they are easily identified as being dedicated to veterans' causes.

Iowa Lottery CEO Terry Rich noted that a new milestone of more than \$12 million has been raised for the Veterans Trust Fund since the lottery began offering games dedicated to that cause. The lottery cre-



ates two new instant-scratch games and two additional pull-tab games each year, with all proceeds from those games dedicated to the Veterans Trust Fund.

The Veterans Trust Fund was established to provide state help to veterans and their families. Those interested in applying for assistance through the fund should contact their County Veterans Affairs Office or the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs.

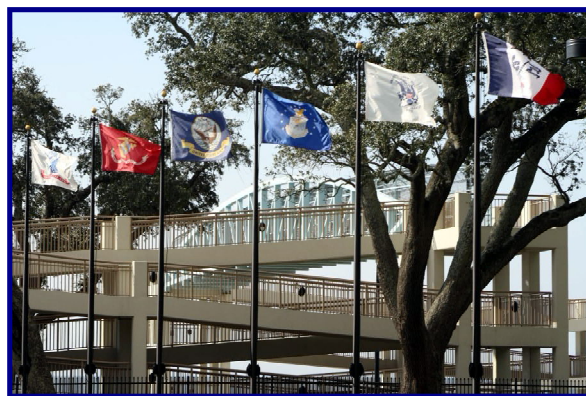
For more information about these veteran-dedicated lottery games, contact: Mary Neubauer: 515-725-7906 or [mneubauer@ialottery.com](mailto:mneubauer@ialottery.com).

### Corridor Medical Shuttle

The Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) has announced that they have received funding which will allow for a twice weekly medical shuttle service between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City hospitals. The "Corridor Medical Shuttle" began transporting passengers the last week in January. It is primarily designed as a way to enable IowaCare patients without transportation to get to University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics and non-ambulatory veterans to get to VA Hospitals for needed appointments. Visit their webpage for scheduling information: <http://365ride.org>. For additional information contact: Terry Bergen, Transportation Advisory Group, [t.bergen@nts-cr.org](mailto:t.bergen@nts-cr.org), 319-329-2120.

### Armed Forces Retirement Home Flies Iowa Flag

Steve Brown, a native of Nora Springs, Iowa, enlisted in the U.S. Navy in September 1960. He currently resides at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi. The retirement home is one of two such facilities — the other is located in Washington, DC. The Gulfport home has 508 residents who come from all branches of the military and are either retired from the military or have been in a qualifying combat zone. They are pleased to call AFRH home. (More information can be found at: [www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov).)



*Iowa State flag flying with branch flags of armed forces*

branch flags of all five branches of the armed forces, plus one flag from each state that will be flown for one week at a time. The goal is to acquire flags from all 50 states and territories belonging to the United States. IDVA was honored to donate an Iowa flag to Steve and the AFRH home.

As promised, Steve sent a photo of the Iowa state flag flying with the branch flags of the armed forces at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, MS. Steve commented that, "it took a while but the Iowa flag finally made it and it sure looks 'Pretty and Proud' as it flutters with the branch flags."

Recently, six new flag poles were installed to display the

## Local News and Updates Con't.

### Pearl Harbor Day

Every December 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:55 a.m., a ceremony is held at the Iowa Pearl Harbor Memorial in Des Moines to honor those who were there in 1941. For those Iowa sailors and soldiers who saw the Japanese bombs fall, December 7<sup>th</sup> will always be a day that will “live in infamy” ...a day impossible to forget. More than 2,400 Americans were killed and more than 1,100 were wounded on that day. The day after the attack, the United States declared war on Japan and entered World War II.

Two Pearl Harbor survivors attended this



years remembrance service at the State's Pearl Harbor Memorial. Although their numbers have dwindled over the years, they still share a deep desire to keep the memory of December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941 alive. The survivors hope that when they're no longer able to be living witnesses to that terrible day, the lessons and sacrifices of Pearl Harbor will live on for generations to come.

There's no exact count of how many Pearl Harbor survivors are still alive, although it's estimated that there are fewer than 3,000 nationwide.





## Federal News and Updates

### A Slice of History from VA Historian Darlene Richardson

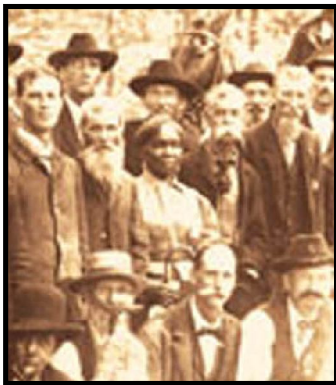
After the Second Confiscation Act was enacted on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1862, freedom was offered to African American slaves who enlisted for military service with the Union forces during the Civil War. Many slaves fled and embarked on treacherous journeys to Union forts and encampments seeking freedom. That summer, a small group of runaway slaves slipped by the large Higgs farm near Grays Creek, Tennessee, on their way to find one of many Union regiments camped in the vicinity. There they met Lucy Higgs, a slave on the Higgs' farm, and she soon joined them on their freedom quest.

Lucy Higgs, along with her daughter and husband, traveled at night on foot, through fields, briars, and underbrush until they found a Union camp near Bolivar, Tennessee. There, Lucy joined the 23<sup>rd</sup> Indiana regiment and served as a nurse during the war. She was the only African American and only woman in the regiment. Her travels with the regiment took her to Vicksburg and other battlefields in the South. She came to be known affectionately as "Aunt Lucy" by the men in her regiment.

After the 23<sup>rd</sup> Indiana regiment mustered out in the summer of 1865, Lucy followed the men when they returned to their homes in New Albany, Indiana, and she made it her hometown, as well. Lucy later married John Nichols and joined the Grand Army of the Republic as an honorary member. In 1898, after years of applying and being denied, she received a nurse's pension by a Special Act of Congress, with full support from veterans of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Indiana regiment. In 1915, at the age of 77, she died and was buried with full military honors next to her husband in what was then known as the Colored Cemetery in New Albany.

To learn more about Lucy Higgs Nichols, visit these links: [http://www.carnegiecenter.org/exhibit\\_lucy.html](http://www.carnegiecenter.org/exhibit_lucy.html); [http://www.in.gov/history/files/Lucy\\_Deposition\\_A.pdf](http://www.in.gov/history/files/Lucy_Deposition_A.pdf); <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=46622>.

*These photos from 1898 features Lucy Higgs Nichols, in the second row seventh from the left, with a group of Civil War and Spanish-American soldiers at a reunion. Nichols attended every reunion of the regiment ever given. [Photo courtesy of the Historic Image Archive at the New Albany-Floyd County Public Library]*



#### A FEMALE CIVIL WAR VETERAN. "Aunt Lucy" Nickols of Indiana to Have a Pension.

LOUISVILLE, Dec. 26.—"Aunt Lucy" Nickols, a former member of the Twenty-third Indiana Volunteers, who fought all through the civil war, has been notified that the President has signed a special bill giving her \$12 a month.

She was a slave, and escaped, with her husband and little girl, from a cruel master. They joined the regiment at Bolivar, Tenn. The husband was killed, and the woman took up his rifle and marched in his stead. She is a member of the Grand Army of the Republic post at New Albany, just across the river, and takes part in all the parades, wearing her old soldier clothes.

The home of the woman is in New Albany. She is almost seventy years old, but is still strong, and made a strong effort to enlist in the New Albany company during the war with Spain. She is said to have written two letters to President McKinley on the subject.

## Federal News and Updates

### Federal Tuition Assistance Suspended

Due to the current fiscal challenges, the Army and Air Force have announced the suspension of the federal Tuition Assistance (TA) program, effective immediately. The announcement affects all Army and Air Force branches, including Iowa Army and Air National Guard Soldiers and Airmen.

While Soldiers and Airmen are not permitted to submit new requests for tuition assistance, those currently enrolled in courses approved for tuition assistance are allowed to complete their current enrollment and will receive federal Tuition Assistance benefits for that course.

Army and Air Force officials said this suspension is necessary, given the significant military spending cutbacks caused by the combined effects of a possible year-long continuing resolution and sequestration. Both services will re-evaluate their TA policy, should the budgetary situation improve.

***Iowa National Guard Soldiers and Airmen are still eligible for state education benefits under the Iowa National Guard Education Assistance Program (NGEAP), which was created under Iowa law (see Iowa Code 2011 Section 261.86), funded entirely with State tax dollars, and available only to Iowa National Guard members. This program may pay up to 100 percent tuition at the Iowa Regents rate for Iowa public and private universities, colleges, and community colleges.***

Iowa National Guard Soldiers and Airmen may also continue to pursue their educational goals with VA education benefits, if applicable, that include the Montgomery GI Bill, including Active Duty (Chapter 30), Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606), Reserve Education Assistance Program (Chapter 1607), the Post 9/11 GI Bill, and federal grants and other financial aid.

The Iowa National Guard Education Center will continue to provide educational support to Soldiers and Airmen, including educational and vocational counseling, academic testing, credentialing, and transcripts of their military training and experience.

Iowa National Guard Soldiers and Airmen should contact their local education centers with questions and to get updates. Updated information will also be posted to [www.goarmyed.com](http://www.goarmyed.com) (Army National Guard only) and [www.iowanationalguard.com](http://www.iowanationalguard.com). If you have additional questions, contact the following:

- Iowa Army National Guard: Maj. Linda Perdue at [linda.s.perdue.mil@mail.mil](mailto:linda.s.perdue.mil@mail.mil) or office 515-252-4517
- Iowa Air National Guard: Sr. Master Sgt. Mark Houseman at [mark.a.houseman.mil@mail.mil](mailto:mark.a.houseman.mil@mail.mil) or 515-252-4555

For questions concerning the operations, training, and activities of the Iowa Army and Air National Guard, please contact Col. Greg Hapgood, Iowa National Guard Public Affairs Officer, at (515) 252-4582 (office), (515) 971-6385 or by email at [gregory.o.hapgood.mil@mail.mil](mailto:gregory.o.hapgood.mil@mail.mil). You may also contact Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden at (515) 252-4666 (office), (515) 480-7647 (cell), or by email at [duff.e.mcfadden.mil@mail.mil](mailto:duff.e.mcfadden.mil@mail.mil).



The National Resource Directory ([www.NRD.gov](http://www.NRD.gov)) is a federal government website that connects wounded warriors, Service Members, Veterans, families and caregivers to thousands of services and programs at the national, state and local levels that support them during recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration. Visitors to the website can find information on topics such as post-traumatic stress disorder, military and Veterans' benefits, health care, educational opportunities, homeless assistance, employment and much more.

Throughout the past few months, more than 60 new resources have been added to the NRD, bringing the total number of resources that can be accessed from the site to nearly 15,000.

Bulletins will be distributed as new content is added and will correspond to the major subject areas on the NRD. You can subscribe to any or all of the following subject areas to receive updates about:

- ★ Benefits & Compensation
- ★ Education & Training
- ★ Employment
- ★ Family & Caregiver Support
- ★ Health
- ★ Homeless Assistance
- ★ Housing
- ★ Transportation & Travel
- ★ Volunteer Opportunities
- ★ Other Services & Resources
- ★ In The News
- ★ All Subjects

As you are using the NRD, if you do not see your favorite resource, request to have it added by using the Suggest a Resource page. Before being listed on the NRD, all suggested resources are validated to ensure they meet the criteria outlined in the NRD Participation Policy.

We appreciate your continued support of the NRD, and we hope these new features will help you stay connected as we all work together to improve the lives of our wounded warriors, service members, veterans, military families and caregivers. If you have any questions about these new bulletins or about any other feature of the NRD, please contact us at [info@nrd.gov](mailto:info@nrd.gov).



Camp Dodge Staff

Jodi Tymeson  
Executive Director  
[Jodi.Tymeson@iowa.gov](mailto:Jodi.Tymeson@iowa.gov)  
515-242-5331

Bob Steben  
Executive Officer 1  
[Bob.Steben@iowa.gov](mailto:Bob.Steben@iowa.gov)  
515-242-0153

John Halstead  
Veterans Benefits Specialist  
[John.Halstead@iowa.gov](mailto:John.Halstead@iowa.gov)  
515-242-5327

David Heim  
Veterans Benefits Specialist  
[David.Heim@va.gov](mailto:David.Heim@va.gov)  
515-362-7350

Jill Joseph  
Administrative Assistant  
[Jill.Joseph@iowa.gov](mailto:Jill.Joseph@iowa.gov)  
515-242-0033

Missy Miller  
Administrative Assistant  
[Missy.Miller@iowa.gov](mailto:Missy.Miller@iowa.gov)  
515-242-0027

Mari Mielke  
Secretary  
[Mari.Mielke@iowa.gov](mailto:Mari.Mielke@iowa.gov)  
515-242-5331

Bob Betz  
Clerk Specialist  
[Bob.Betz@iowa.gov](mailto:Bob.Betz@iowa.gov)  
515-242-0160

Cemetery Staff

Keith Blum  
Cemetery Superintendent  
[Keith.Blum@iowa.gov](mailto:Keith.Blum@iowa.gov)  
515-996-9048

Mindy McGregor  
Cemetery Representative  
[Melinda.McGregor@iowa.gov](mailto:Melinda.McGregor@iowa.gov)  
515-996-9048

Shane Laycock  
Cemetery Foreman  
[Shane.Laycock@iowa.gov](mailto:Shane.Laycock@iowa.gov)

Jeanna Hampel  
Cemetery Assistant  
[Jeanna.Hampel@iowa.gov](mailto:Jeanna.Hampel@iowa.gov)  
515-996-9048

Brad Perkins  
Cemetery Grounds  
[Brad.Perkins@iowa.gov](mailto:Brad.Perkins@iowa.gov)  
515-996-9048

**Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs**

7105 NW 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Camp Dodge - Building 3663  
Johnston, IA 50131  
<https://va.iowa.gov>  
515.242.5331 Phone  
800.838.4692 Toll Free  
515.242.5659 Fax

